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**CHICO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES**

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that Kevin Ickes, 41, of Chico, California, pleaded guilty today to three counts of distributing, and one count of possessing images depicting minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct. The guilty pleas were entered before Senior United States District Judge Lawrence K. Karlton. Ickes' guilty pleas were entered pursuant to a plea agreement with the government and included his pledge to forfeit the computer equipment and camera used in furtherance of his crimes.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by Special Agents from the Sacramento office of the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, officers from the Butte County Sheriff's Department, and the Butte County District Attorney's Office.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Laurel White, who is prosecuting the case, evidence showed that in September, November and again in December, 2003, Ickes distributed six images depicting minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct to an Internet website called Online Sharing Community. It was later learned that Ickes was a registered sex offender, having been convicted on or about August 28, 1992, in Placer County, of two counts of oral copulation of a person under the age of 16, in violation of California Penal Code § 288a(b)(2).

A search warrant was obtained for Ickes' Chico residence and served on May 27, 2004.

Agents seized a computer and numerous computer disks which were found to contain more than 600 still images and videos depicting minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct. Agents also found copies of the images depicting minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct, bearing the same file names, which Ickes had distributed to the Internet website in late 2003. Ickes admitted to having child pornography images and videos on his computer and admitted uploading the images to the website.

Ickes faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years and maximum sentence of 40 years on the federal distribution charges. His potential sentence is higher than that typically imposed for distribution of child pornography because of the evidence of his prior conviction.

Ickes also faces state charges filed on July 8, 2004 by the Butte County District Attorney's Office. Among the state charges are allegations Ickes engaged in unlawful sexual conduct with a minor under the age of 16.

Ickes is scheduled to be sentenced on the federal charges on January 4, 2005.

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